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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the programs initiated by the District of Columbia Public Schools with the private sector to provide experiences related to the world of work for students. The majority of programs involve grants from private organizations and the utilization of personnel from both the school system and the private sectors in the development of curricula related to entry-level jobs. Major funding for these programs come from a variety of sources, including large corporation grants and technical assistance and foundation grants. A brief description is provided of the purposes and areas of concentration (high school career programs, educational technology, staff development, the arts, and general support) of the programs, grants, and assistance. (CB)

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THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORK-ORIENTED CURRICULUM

A Description of the Role of the Private Sector in Curriculum Planning and Implementation in the District of Columbia Public Schools

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the programs initiated by the District of Columbia Public Schools with the private sector to provide experiences related to the world of work for students. The majority of programs involve grants from private organizations and the utilization of personnel both from the school system and the private sectors in the development of curricula related to entry level jobs. Some programs prepare students for post-secondary education, others provide technical assistance and on-the-job training for job placement upon graduation.

Major funding for these projects come from a variety of sources. Large corporations such as General Motors, Xerox Corporation, etc. have given grants as well as technical assistance and foundations such as the Ford Foundation, Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation, etc. have provided funds for projects.

The five areas of concentration are high school career programs, educational technology, staff development, the arts, and general support. A brief description of the purposes of these grants and the assistance given form the major part of the paper. The programs initiated by the District of Columbia Public Schools can serve as a model to other school systems in designing curriculum to prepare students for the world of work.

Background and Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to describe the relationship between the public school system of the District of Columbia and the private sector in planning and implementing activities designed to prepare secondary school students for the world of work both through postsecondary programs and work related skills programs. Curriculum planning and implementation with private organizations has been a major goal of the public school system in order to emphasize the application of what occurs within the school day and the everyday world of work in which the students will enter.

The District of Columbia Public Schools

The District of Columbia is a geographical area in which the federal government for the United States is located. It is primarily a self-governed area, electing its own mayor, city council and school board members. Within that geographical area, the District of Columbia Public School system operates elementatry and secondary schools for approximately 185,000 students and the programs described in this paper are designed for this population.

Overview

Since September 1981, the District of Columbia Public School system has forged numerous new partnerships with national and local corporations, trade associations and foundations to assist in improving the instructional programs in the schools.

Because many of the high school graduates seek entry level jobs without the requisite skills, a broadened view of career preparation in a high tech era is vitally important. In this effort, the entire community, private and public, must share responsibility for the education of our youth.

Cooperation between the school district and business sector is based on the premise that by working closely together they can serve simultaneously the goals of quality education and sound business management. On the one hand, students need not only a thorough training in the basic competencies of reading and mathematics, but also more career preparation for their entrance into the work force, whether immediately after high school or after postsecondary study. On the other, business and industry need well-trained employees with a broad based education and equipped with the skills required by an increasingly technological society.

Therefore, private sector involvement with the District of Columbia Public Schools extends the capability to improve education by bringing the business community's array of expertise and resources to the schools. They in turn can offer a better-prepared and skilled labor force to the potential employers of the graduates.

The extensive commitment of time, personnel, and money on the part of the private sector in the education of today's students - and tomorrow's workers - is virtually unprecedented. Local and national business leaders are making this investment because they believe in the ability of the school system to produce results-results that will return more than the initial investments themselves. They also recognize that it is in their own best interest to act early, to help create academic and career-oriented progrmas that produce motivated, able graduates who are better prepared to meet the needs of an evolving workplace. As a result, corporate leaders have participated actively in the design, implementation, and provision of technical support, as well as direct financial and in-kind assistance, of programs in four main areas: high school career programs, educational technology, staff develcpment, and the arts. In addition, other corporations and foundations have provided considerable general support which serves as a catalyst to extend to youngsters the benefits from these and other programs.

These private sector partners, many of whom have pledged a long-term collaboration in these efforts, represent a cross-section of leading American corporations and local businesses. National corporations that

have played key roles in the public/private partnerships venture include General Motors, IBM, Control Data, and Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Leaders among local businesses and associations include Goldberg/Marchesano and Associates, George Washington University Medical Center, District of Columbia Banker's Association, and the Hotel Association of Washington, D.C. In addition, the Ford Foundation recently awarded a major grant for partial support of the new high school career programs co-sponsored by private industry.

Private sector assistance has taken many forms: direct cash contributions, donations of supplies and equipment, loans of personnel and equipment, and the less easily quantifiable areas of advice and support in a range of activities from curriculum design and technical assistance to the recruitment of additional business involvement. A conservative estimate of the private sector's financial and in-kind investment in the schools since September 1981 exceeds $4 million. In addition to grants and loans directly to the school system, this figure includes corporate and foundation contributions to nonprofit organizations to enable them to provide services for the students.

The following discussion of public/private programs includes an update of the investment - both direct and indirect, as best we know - by the private sector in this school system.

HIGH SCHOOL CAREER PROGRAMS

Five high school career programs have provided the principal focus for private sector involvement. The private partners have participated actively in sponsoring, designing, and launching these career programs which represent major fields with projected growth and future employment opportunities for the youth in this city. These high school career programs build on the system's prior experience with the existing career high schools of fine arts, aerospace and marine science, and mathematics and science. With the help of the private sector, school-within-a-school programs are being designed to produce competitive graduates for today's

employment market, as well as students prepared to enter postsecondary institutions.

The programs stress basic skills proficiency, refinement of curricular offering to address potential employers' needs, employability training, and rigorous academic preparation. Students are recruited city-wide on a program-by-program basis. The five career programs are:

Pre-engineering

Health Professions Program

Communications Program

Business and Finance Program

Hotel Management and Culinary Arts Program

Our private sector partners are involved in many aspects of the high school career programs. Their participation is extensive and is directed principally toward the following general areas:

Curriculum Development

Technical Support

Instruction

Employment

Business Liaison

Financial Contributions

The high school career programs and the extent of private sector participation are described in the following section. It is worth noting that while the high school career programs represent the principal

effort in which we have collaborated with the private sector, we have intentionally sought their involvement and guidance more than their financial contribution. Whenever possible, however, an estimate of the dollar value of the contribution or services rendered is indicated.

The Ford Foundation recently recognized the value of our high school career programs with a grant of $477,300 to provide general assistance for this effort. The funding is directed toward supporting the high school career programs in several ways. As a result of the grant, each career program is now able to hire a full-time program coordinator to oversee curriculum development, serve as a liaison with the private sector sponsors, and assist in bridging the gap between the school environment and the world of work. In four programs, the foundation is also supporting computer laboratory programs which extend our capacity to strengthen basic skills/career education. Under the grant, we are also able to institute an employability skills training program.

This grant towards support of the high school career programs enables us to attract talented personnel and provide training virtually certain to enhance the effectiveness of each career program. In addition, it will serve to highlight for other major corporations, foundations, and school systems, the importance of our collaborative venture with the private sector.

1. Pre-Engineering Program

Students receive academic and career-related instruction in engineering, technology, and applied science. The rigorous curriculum emphasizes mathematics, science, and language arts. Upon completion of the four-year curriculum, students will be prepared for college programs inindustrial, chemical, electrical, and civil engineering. The program is under the prime sponsorship of the General Motors Corporation, in conjunction with the General Motors Institute for Engineering and Management, IBM, and Potomac Electric Power Company. These three corporations constitute the advisory council for the program.

Private participation:

GENERAL MOTORS

General Motors has played a lead role in the development of the program. Specifically, GM has provided

Technical services of the senior faculty of the General Motors Institute for Engineering and Management for the initial design of our program.

Training, plus lodging and board, for four teachers for four weeks at the General Motors Institute.

Assesment of laboratory facilities and equipment, with a view toward supplementing needed items.

IBM

Program design assistance.

Indefinite loan of ten personal computers (valued at approximately $4,000 each) to support the schools' computer laboratory facilities.

POTOMAC ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY

Staff development (an externship for the principal and teachers during one summer.

Engineering graphics instruction

Provision of furnishings and supplies to support the engineering graphics laboratory.

Designation of senior and mid-level executives to be mentors for approximately 50 students.

ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION

Grant for $10,000 to assist in program planning

FORD FOUNDATION

Full-time program coordinator

Employability skills training

2. Health Professions Program:

Under the sponsorship of a consortium of area hospitals, the health professions program was established. Students receive training and pre-college preparation in health career professions. A four-year academic curriculum has been designed with assistance from industry representatives. Students may concentrate in health science courses or in health business courses, with a technical curriculum to meet industry skill requirements. Opportunities are provided for students to have internship and work experiences at local health care facilities.

Private participation:

George Washington University Medical Center, in collaboration with Howard University, District of Columbia General Hospital, Capitol Hill Hospital, and Children's Hospital National Medical Center.

Technical consultation in program design and development

Staff development (hospital externships for teachers during the summer

Laboratory facility and equipment assesments, with a view toward supplementing needed items.

Senior executives and technicians to serve as mentors for students.

Student internships, guest lectures, field trips, and seminars.

FORD FOUNDATION

Full-time program coordinator

Suport for the school's computer laboratory, with emphasis on math, science, career exploration, and work readiness.

3. Communication program:

The program is under the prime sponorship of Goldberg/Marchesano and Associates, a local advertising and public relations firm. A curriculum was developed by the school's staff with design assistance from industry representatives. Students receive classroom instruction and technical training in radio and television, advertising, journalism, and graphics. Emphasis is placed on strong written and oral communication skills. Independent study projects and actual production work in each area of concentration are key elements of this program.

Private participation:

Goldberg/Marchesano and Associates has played a central role in the development of the communications program. The firm has provided the following:

Assistance and guidance in design of partnership program. (An initial commitment of $20,000 was provided for the purchase of goods and services to help support the program.

Recruitment of additional private sector participants; 65 companies have agreed to help.

Internships for teachers during the summer and for seniors during the school year.

Public relations - preparing promotional materials such as pamphlets, posters, and the public service announcements.

Design of informational materials to assist in recruiting students.

Facilities and equipment audit, with a view toward supplying and updating needed items.

NATIONAL HOME LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Grant of $5,000 to purchase resource materials

TIME, INC

Technical assistance in program design and development

Facilities and equipment audit in conjunction with Goldberg/Marchesano

Library materials for the communications program

XEROX CORPORATION

Xerox Corporation committed $42,000 for 60 eight-week jobs for students with a stipend of $700 per student. Xeorx arranged the job placements with a number of companies, including Communication Satellite Corpration (COMSAT), the National Cable Television Association, Howard University, the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company, and various radio and television stations.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF GREATER WASHINGTON

Grant of $10,827 to underwrite development and printing of tutorial materials

EUGENE AND AGNES E. MEYER FOUNDATION

Grant of $1,500 for tutorial materials

FORD FOUNDATION

Full-time program coordinator

Support for computer laboratory program module

Employability skills training program

4. Business and Finance Program

Students are receiving academic and career training leading to entry-level pre-college preparation for accounting and marketing employment in several areas of business finance: banking and finance, management, accounting, marketing, data processing/word processing, and secretarial/clerical skills. A four-year curriculum model is being developed based on an industry-supplied survey of requisite skills needed for projected employment areas.

Private participation:

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BANKER'S ASSOCIATION

Program development and refinement

Opportunities for student participation in the Washington Banking Institute's training program

Facilities and equipment assessment and support

Student and teacher internships, guest lecturers and seminars

Leadership in developing increased industry support

FORD FOUNDATION

Full-time program coordinator

Support for computer laboratory facilities, with emphasis on math, science, communications, career exploration, and employability skills

5. Hotel Management and Culinary Arts Program

This program consists of two independent components. A hotel management program, under the sponorship of the Hotel Association, is operated in conjunction with the Howard Inn. The hotel management program is a planned sequence of classroom instruction and laboratory experiences designed to prepare students for careers in the hotel-restaurant field and for entry into college level training.

The second component of the program is the Culinary Arts Program, implemented in cooperation with the Private Industry Council and the Hotel Association of the District of Columbia, Two classes of twelth-grade and post-secondary students receive 26 weeks of professional classroom instruction and on-the-job training to prepare them for immediate employment as cooks and chefs. Job placement services are provided after completion of training. The program was deigned by the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York, and is taught by two professionally trained instructors from the Institute.

Private participation:

Hotel Association of Washington, D.C.

Program design and development

Assesment of facilities and fixtures; redesigning of facilities to create instructional kitchen and provision of additional fixtures, including a four-tier baker's oven

Commitment of $20,000 toward support of the culinary arts program in collaboration with the Private Industry Council

Contribution of expenses for head teacher at Culinary Institute of America during the summer

Staff development through externships for teachers at hotels during the summer

Shadowing and on-the-job training opportunities for program enrollees

PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL (PIC)

Contribution of $132,000 to support the culinary arts program, including guest chefs from the CIA to teach during the current school year, and on-the-job training for program graduates at local hotels and restaurants.

FORD FOUNDATION

Full-time program coordinator

Support for computer laboratory, and employability skills program

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

The initiatives taken in the area of educational technology to increase the computer literacy of administrators, teachers, and students place the D.C. schools ahead of the majority of urban school systems throughout the nation. The private partners view these efforts as a sound investment and have supported them in various ways. Major assistance has been received in this area from:

DIGITAL CORPORATION

Seminars on computer technology for the Superintendent's senior staff

Preliminary planning to assist in developing a training institute for computer technicians as well as student internships and teacher

training at Digital's corporate training facility

Donation of computer graphics facilities ("GIGI") estimated at $25,000

CONTROL DATA CORPORATION

Award of $118,000 grant to support the PLATO educational technology laboratory

An instructional management module and consulting services valued at $13,700

IBM CORPORATION, in conjunction with the JOHN HENRY MARTIN CORPORATION

"Writing to Read Project," involving loaned equipment - computers, typewriters, tape recorders - for special laboratories for kindergarten and first grade students and teachers in 15 elementary schools, together with teacher training.

MISSO CORPORATION

Grant of $22,000 to support the lease or purchase of equipment

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Leading corporations and foundations recognize the importance of our recent initiatives in staff development and leadership training. Their support has taken a variety of forms, ranging from teacher externships in private industry to loans of training personnel and financial contributions for special training projects. To date the principal private sector supporters of these efforts are:

GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION

Loan of senior trainer to develop and execute a team-building retreat and carry out follow-

up activities for the Superintendent's senior staff

EUGENE AND AGNES E. MEYER FOUNDATION

Grant of $10,000 to support leadership training program for principals

FORD FOUNDATION

Grant of $190,000 to the Institute for Educational Leadership for a project to support training of secondary school counselors and teachers in the field of transition from school to work.

ARTS

Instruction in and exposure to the arts is essential to sound, quality public education. the MOBIL CORPORATION, recognizing the school system's commitment to arts programming awarded a three-year, $616,000 grant to Young Audiences, Inc. to bring a series of music, dance, and theatre programs to the D.C. schools. These performances are supplemented by instructional workshops in more than 20 schools with some schools having artistic residencies. It is estimated that in a three year period the program will have reached as many as 100,000 of the District's 185,000 public school students.

GENERAL SUPPORT

These initiatives have also generated substantial private support that cuts across a number of areas, including those described above. Many other corporations have provided general support for the school system's activities.

In conclusion, the progress the school system has made in attracting private sector support is gratifying, but it is only a beginning. Now that the schol system has launched several new educational ventures in collaboration with the private sector, notably the high

school career programs, it should look forward to continuing to work closely with private partners in refining and expanding these initiatives to meet the needs of students and of their prospective employers. Likewise, the support received to date is generating additional participation by other local and national corporations and foundations. This business-education venture has become a model for other urban school systems and has long range implications for the future of urban public education.